

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful and thorough examination of the present application, for correctly withdrawing the prior rejections, and for extending all courtesies to Applicants' Attorney during the telephonic interview of June 2, 2011.

During the telephonic interview, Applicants proposed amending the claims to address the Examiner's objections and \$101 rejections. The Examiner correctly agreed to withdraw these rejections and objections in light of the proposed claim amendments, and Applicants have proceeded as such herein.

Moreover, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 9, 14, and 17 to more clearly define the claimed invention over the prior art. Applicants have amended dependent Claims 2-3 & 5, 7, 10, and 18-19 for consistency. Applicant has also added new Claims 22-24, which derive their support from paragraph 21 of the present application.

Applicants submit that all claims are patentable, present arguments and amendments herein supporting such patentability, and respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all pending rejections and allow all claims.

I. The Amended Claims

Amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a communications system that may comprise a plurality of e-mail account databases, each configured to store information associated with different e-mail accounts. The communication system may also include a central database configured to store location information associating each e-mail account with a

respective e-mail account database, and shared system setup information for accessing the plurality of email account databases, a communications device configured to access e-mail account information, and an interface device. The interface device may be configured to receive an e-mail account access request from the communications device for a desired e-mail account, retrieve and cache e-mail account location information from the central database for the desired e-mail account, and initially and subsequently interface the communications device with the respective e-mail account database associated with the desired e-mail account based upon the email account location information, and retrieve and cache the shared system setup information by the respective email account database to interface the communications device with the respective e-mail account database.

Amended independent Claim 9 is directed to an interface device sub-combination, and has been amended similarly. Amended independent Claim 14 is directed to a method counterpart to Claim 1, and has been amended similarly. Amended independent Claim 17 is directed to a related computer-readable medium, and has been amended similarly.

II. The Amended Claims Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 9, 14, and 17 over Rierden et al. in view of Jenkins et al. Rierden et al. discloses a subscriber management system that includes at least one Data Directory Server (DDS) located between one or more transaction generators and one or more data servers. The DDS routes transactions and provides data location functions. Based upon internal rules within the DDS and the particular transaction type, the DDS routes transactions to the appropriate servers. Transactions are classified according to where they may be executed. Specifically, transactions may be classified as SPECIFIC, ANY, or ALL. (Col. 4, lines 11-28).

The system of Rierden et al. further comprises an X-REF server for storing the location information, global tables, so the DDS accesses the correct data server based upon the data needed by the transaction request. (Col. 8, lines 31-39). Rierden et al. discloses that the DDS may either access the global tables on the X-REF server on a per transaction basis or at start-up, by loading the entire global table for full and complete operation. (Col. 8, lines 40-50; Col. 9, lines 8-13).

The Examiner correctly notes that Rierden et al. fails to disclose or fairly suggest using the cached account location information for interfacing the communications device with the respective account database subsequent to the initial interfacing of the communications device, as recited by the independent claims. The Examiner looks to Jenkins et al. for this deficiency. Jenkins et al. discloses a system for

serving data requests and comprising a plurality of clients and servers. The clients cache a list of identifiers and locators for previously accessed objects for subsequent use. In particular, Jenkins et al. discloses the storing of tuples comprising the identifier and a location for the resource being accessed. When a request is generated at the client, the client first searches the stored tuples for the identifier of the needed resource. If the tuple is cached locally, the client does not make a duplicate request to the server. The client may also cache server lists where "the listed servers are more likely than other server to have a copy of the desired object." (Col. 6, lines 56-59).

Applicants have amended independent Claim 1, for example, to recite the central database configured to store location information associating each e-mail account with a respective e-mail account database, and shared system setup information for accessing the plurality of email account databases. Applicants respectfully submit that neither of the applied prior art references discloses or fairly suggests this claim feature. Quite differently, Jenkins et al. discloses that the clients are making requests for generic "objects." (Col. 6, lines 65-67). Moreover, the caching of the tuples in Jenkins et al. is located at the client device rather than the interface device, as in the claimed invention. Also, Rierden et al. discloses processing of transaction requests.

Moreover, neither Rierden et al. nor Jenkins et al. discloses the central database configured to store shared system setup information for accessing the plurality of email account databases or the interface device being configured to

also retrieve and cache the shared system setup information by the respective email account database to interface the communications device with the respective e-mail account database. In contrast, although Jenkins et al. discloses the storage of a server list, this list is stored at the client device.

Also, Applicants note that neither of the applied prior art references discloses or fairly suggests the interface device configured to receive the account access request comprising an e-mail account identifier, and to use the e-mail account identifier to identify the respective e-mail account in the respective e-mail account database, as recited in new dependent Claim 22, for example.

Accordingly, because of the above noted deficiencies, it is submitted that amended independent Claims 1, 9, 14, and 17 are patentable over the prior art. Their respective dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features, are also patentable over the prior art and require no further discussion herein.

In re Patent Application of
CLARKE ET AL.
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CONCLUSIONS

In view of the amendments to the claims and the arguments presented above, it is submitted that all of the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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